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Litargus (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* sp. nov.: A new species of hairy fungus beetle (Coleoptera: Tenebrionoidea: Mycetophagidae) from West Bengal, India

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Keywords:

Coleoptera;
Tenebrionoidea;
Mycetophagidae;
Litargus;
taxonomy;
new species;
description;
Bengal;
India.

Abstract. – The diversity of hairy fungus beetles of the subgenus *Litargosomus* Motschulsky, 1858 under the genus *Litargus* Erichson, 1846 (Coleoptera: Tenebrionoidea: Mycetophagidae) of India has been studied and a new species *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**. is described, illustrated and compared with similar species. A key to India *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) species has been provided.

Chakrovorty A., Háva J. & Bhattacharjee B., 2025. – *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* **sp**. **nov**.: A new species of hairy fungus beetle (Coleoptera: Tenebrionoidea: Mycetophagidae) from West Bengal, India. *Faunitaxys*, 13(46): 1 – 10.

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Introduction

The family Mycetophagidae Leach, 1815 comprises small sized fungus eating beetles (mycophagous) and are commonly known as Hairy Fungus Beetle. By general appearance they have an oblong or oval-shaped body covered with pubescence, coarsely faceted compound eyes and clubbed antennae (Young, 2002). Mycetophagidae is represented by 32 genera and 243 species (Lawrence et al, 2014; Háva, 2022, (unpublished raw data)). Despite having a global range, the Mycetophagidae occur primarily in the Palearctic and Afrotropical regions, where they make up 41% and 16% of the global fauna, respectively. Just 8% of the world's fauna is found in the Oriental region. Although limited remains understood about the biology of Mycetophagidae, some species have been found in decaying logs, under bark, and in association with fungi. Species of *Litargus* and *Mycetophagus* are frequently found in fleshy polypores (bracket fungi) and the decomposing fruiting bodies of mushrooms, especially those that have started to dry out (Majka, 2010). The genus *Litargus* Erichson, 1846 currently comprises 90 species worldwide (Háva 2022, 2023b, 2024c, 2025). Species from the Oriental Region taxa have been described by Grouvelle (1900) and recently by Háva (2021, 2023a, 2023b, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c, 2025) and Jung (2022). Four species of *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) are known from India, of which *L.* (*L.*) *jendeki* Háva, 2023 and *L.* (*L.*) *taprobanae* Grouvelle, 1902 are known from the Indian mainland and *L.* (*L.*) *majeri* Háva, 2024 and *L.* (*L.*) *orientalis* Háva, 2024 are known to be distributed from Andaman Islands. The new beetle species was collected from West Bengal and Meghalaya and taxonomic analysis was conducted based on morphological specifications and was determined to be belonging to the genus *Litargus* Erichson, 1846 and the subgenus *Litargosomus* Motschulsky, 1858. Additionally, a key to Indian *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) had been prepared.

Material and Methods

Chemicals. – Alcohol was purchased form Changshu Hongsheng Fine Chemicals, China. Glycerol, Potassium Hydroxide, Xylene and DPX Mounting medium were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich, USA.

Collection of the specimen. – The holotype and paratype specimens from West Bengal were collected using a flight interception trap. Immediately after collection the specimen was stored in 95% molecular biology grade ethanol for further analysis. Later the specimen was mounted on acid-free triangular card points for photography and taxonomic analysis. The collection method for the paratype (from Meghalaya) is not known. The holotype and paratypes (from W. Bengal) are deposited in the iForNature – Nature Club Entomology Collection, Kolkata, West Bengal, India for the study and shall later be deposited to the Entomology Collection of the Department of Zoology, University of Kalyani and the paratype (from W. Bengal) is deposited in Private Entomological Laboratory & Collection of Jiří Háva (JHAC), Únětice u Prahy, Prague-West, Czech Republic. The collection sites have been provided in Fig. 1.

Microscopy and morphometric analysis. – Radical Stereo Zoom Trinocular Microscope (RSM-9F) (Radical Scientific Equipments Pvt. Ltd., Ambala Cantonment, Haryana, India) was

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used to examine the specimens. The pictures were captured with a Sony Alpha-58 (SLT-A58) camera fitted with a Cyruss adapter for a Sony DSLR and a Hayear 41-megapixel HDMI microscope camera with a 0.5x trinocular adapter (Shenzhen Hayear Electronics Co. Ltd., China). The manufacturer's original software was used to analyze the images. Helicon Focus 8 software was used to stack images that were taken at various layers with the sharpest focus into a single image standard morphometric terms are used for the body parameters (Chakrovorty *et al*., 2023; Bhattacharjee *et al*., 2024; Chakrovorty and Bhattacharjee, 2025).

The size of the beetles or of their body parts can be useful in species recognition and thus, the following measurements were made and the following abbreviations were used for this study:

AA_{3+4} : Anal anterior wing vein (branch 3+4)
AP_{3+4} : Anal posterior wing vein (branch 3+4)
AE : Anal embayment on wing
AL : Length of antenna
CAS : Cubitoanal strut of wing (Cu + CuP + AA3)
Cu : Cubital vein of wing
CuA_2 : Cubitus anterior wing vein
ED : Diameter of eye
EL : Elytral length from anterior margin of scutellum to the tip of elytra
EW : Maximum width of elytra
$FL_{(fore\text{-}hind)}$: Length of femur (foreleg, midleg, hindleg)
FLL : Length of individual flagellomeres 1 to 11 is arranged sequentially
FLW : Maximum width of individual flagellomeres 1 to 11 is arranged sequentially
HL : Linear distance of head measured between anterior margin of labrum to anterior pronotal margin
HW : Maximum width of head in dorsal view
IOD : Intraocular distance measured between inner ocular margins
LLP : Length of labial palpi
LMP : Length of maxillary palpi
ME : Medial embayment
MF : Medial fleck (binding patch)
MP : Media posterior vein
PL : Length of pronotum between anterior and posterior margins measured dorsally along the central axis
PW : Maximum width of pronotum measured dorsally
R : Radial cell
RA : Radial anal cell
RML : Radiomedial loop of wing
RP : Radius posterior wing vein
SL : Length of scutellar shield
SS : Support sclerites
SS1 : Specialized support sclerite
SW : Width of scutellum along anterior margin
$TBL_{(fore\text{-}hind)}$: Length of tibia (foreleg, midleg, hindleg)
TL : Total length of body (HL + PL + EL)
$TSL_{(fore\text{-}hind)}$: Length of tarsus from base of first tarsomere to base of claw (foreleg, midleg, hindleg)

Study of genitalia. – The genitalia were prepared for the study following common practice (Háva *et al*., 2024; Chakrovorty *et al*., 2024; Chakrovorty *et al*., 2025). In brief, the abdomens were dissected carefully and placed in 10% KOH (Sigma-Aldrich, USA) solution overnight, later the female genitalia was removed, cleaned, gradually dehydrated, mounted as permanent slide and examined under a compound microscope (Generic SSD trinocular compound microscope, Shubham Solutions Diagnostic, India).

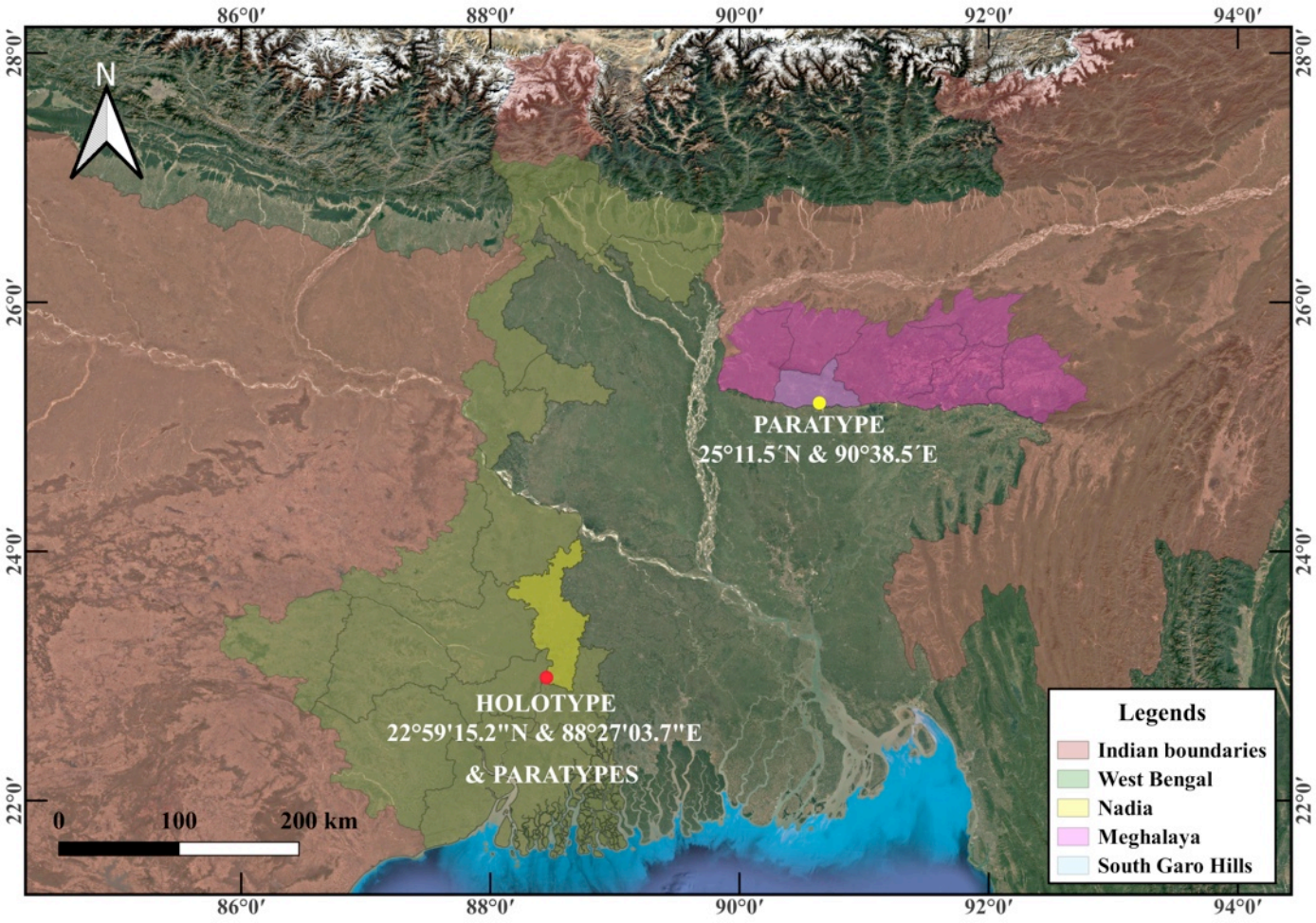

Fig. **1**. Map showing the collection site of the holotype and paratype specimens. (Created using QGIS software, version 3.28)

Systematic

Genus ***Litargus*** Erichson, 1846:415

Subgenus ***Litargosomus*** Motschulsky, 1858:52

Litargus (***Litargosomus***) ***arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**.

(Fig. 2-5)

ZooBank: https://zoobank.org/D0305487-9419-4AAD-916E-05A5CF36A86A

Type Material (**N=10**, ♀♂).

Holotype, ♀, glued on cardboard point with labels as follows: "INDIA, West Bengal, Nadia, Kalyani, University of Kalyani campus [22°59'15.2"N & 88°27'03.7"E]" "alt. 11 m, flight interception trap, 28.Dec. 2024, Arnob Chakrovorty" "Coleoptera, Tenebrionoidea, Mycetophagidae, Mycetophaginae" "HOLOTYPE (♀) *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* sp. nov. Háva & Chakrovorty det. 2024" [red handwritten label] (iForNature – Nature Club Entomology Collection).

Paratypes

- **1** ♀, glued on cardboard point with labels as follows "NE India, Meghalaya, South Garo Hills, Baghmara [25°11.5´N & 90°38.5´E]" "21.May.1996, Jendek & Šauša lgt." "PARATYPE (♀) *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* sp. nov. Háva & Chakrovorty det. 2024" [red printed label] (JHAC).

- **2** ♀, **2** ♂, glued on cardboard point with labels same as HOLOTYPE, "alt. 11 m, flight interception trap, 16.Jan.2025, Arnob Chakrovorty";

- **1** ♂, glued on cardboard point with labels same as HOLOTYPE, "alt. 11 m, flight interception trap, 17.Mar.2025, Arnob Chakrovorty";

- **2** ♀, glued on cardboard point with labels same as HOLOTYPE, "alt. 11 m, flight interception trap, 08.May.2025, Arnob Chakrovorty";

Allotype, ♂, glued on cardboard point with labels same as HOLOTYPE. "alt. 11 m, flight interception trap, 16.Jan.2025, Arnob Chakrovorty".

Diagnosis. –The genus *Litargus* can be identified based on the combination of the following characters, body oval, pubescent; antennae 11-segmented with last three segments forming a prominent loose club; head short, triangular, head width (across eyes) much narrower than pronotum; maxilla with separate galeae and laciniae, maxillary palpi 4-segmented, labial palpi short, 3-segmented, tarsal formulae 4-4-4 (female); mentum trapezoidal, procoxal cavities open behind; basal angles of pronotum pronounced and well defined; epipleural fold of elytra concave; hindwing with radical cell and subcubital fleck.

Description

Measurements (mm) **of holotype**

TL 2.349, HL 0.364, HW 0.551, IOD 0.272, ED 0.198, AL 0.601, $FLL_{(1\text{-}11)}$ 0.076, 0.064, 0.058, 0.040, 0.035, 0.035, 0.031, 0.032, 0.070, 0.066, 0.107, $FLW_{(1\text{-}11)}$ 0.051, 0.034, 0.029, 0.026, 0.027, 0.029, 0.028, 0.036, 0.058, 0.062, 0.059, LLP 0.067, LMP 0.205, PL 0.472, PW 1.023, EL 1.513, EW 1.087, SL 0.108, SW 0.171, FL_{fore} 0.412, TBL_{fore} 0.291, TSL_{fore} 0.271, FL_{mid} 0.441, TBL_{mid} 0.420, TSL_{mid} 0.353, FL_{hind} 0.480, TBL_{hind} 0.490, TSL_{hind} 0.506.

Female

Body. – Measurements TL 2.6-3.1 mm, EW 1.4-1.6 mm; oblong-oval, subparallel-sided; weakly convex dorsally, weakly glossy; brownish black, covered with short brown and yellow recumbent setation; elytra brownish black with orange-yellowish patterns (Fig. 2).

Head. – Dark coffee-brown, with dense and coarse punctures; covered by intermixed yellow and brown, recumbent seta (Fig. 2A, 3A). Labrum brown, ovoidal in shape, measuring 0.078 mm and 0.184 mm in length and width respectively, distal margin covered with one single row of thick seta (Fig. 3F). Eyes prominent, ovoid in shape, coarsely faceted and slightly emarginate near antennal insertions. Antennae filiform with 11 antennomeres, brown in colour; last three antennomeres form antennal club which is darker brown in colour, tip of terminal antennomere with a pale spot, terminal antennomere longest, antennomeres 5 to 8 subequal in length; antennomeres 4-8 cylindrical with sub-parallel lateral margins (Fig. 3E); Labial palps three segmented, 3rd palpomere cylindrical; Maxillary palps four segmented, 2nd and 3rd palpomeres trapezoidal, distal tip of terminal palpomere oblique. Labium and maxilla approximately uniformly brown coloured, submentum rectangular; distal tip of prementum setose; galea quadrilateral, measuring 0.052 mm and 0.048 mm in length and width respectively, distal margin covered with dense seta of variable lengths; Lacinia slender, covered with seta on the anterior margin; palpifer triangular in shape with two thick seta, one near anterior margin towards base of maxillary palp and another touches the lateral margin, both pointing towards maxillary palps (Fig. 3F). Mandible thick and robust as in Fig. 3H.

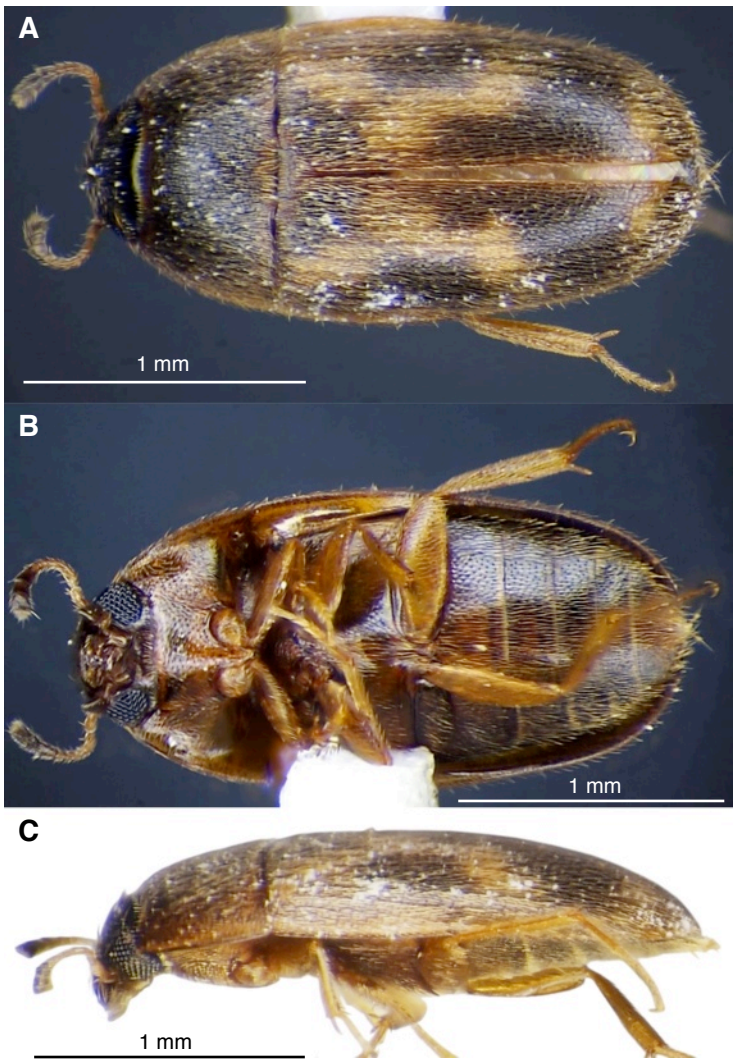

Fig. **2**. ***Litargus*** (***Litargosomus***) ***arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**., holotype. **A**. Dorsal habitus. **B**. Ventral habitus. **C**. Lateral habitus.

Pronotum. – Dark brown, covered by brown setation, lateral parts orange-yellowish with yellow recumbent setation, convex dorsally and V-shaped ventrally when viewed along the transverse plane (Fig. 3D), rugose, with large and dense punctures; widest posteriorly; anterior margin slightly arcuate; lateral sides roundly arcuate; posterior margin bisinuate, without short and circular grooves on sub-basal parts. Prosternal carina raised and the posterior tip extends beyond the margin of the procoxal cavity; hypomeron with prominent concave depression that touches the anterior margin of procoxal cavity.

Elytra. – Brownish black with orangish-yellow patterns covered by yellow recumbent setation, yellow markings make X-pattern on anterior half of elytra; brown patterns covered by brown seta, elongate, convex-sided when viewed dorsally, narrowed from apical fourth to

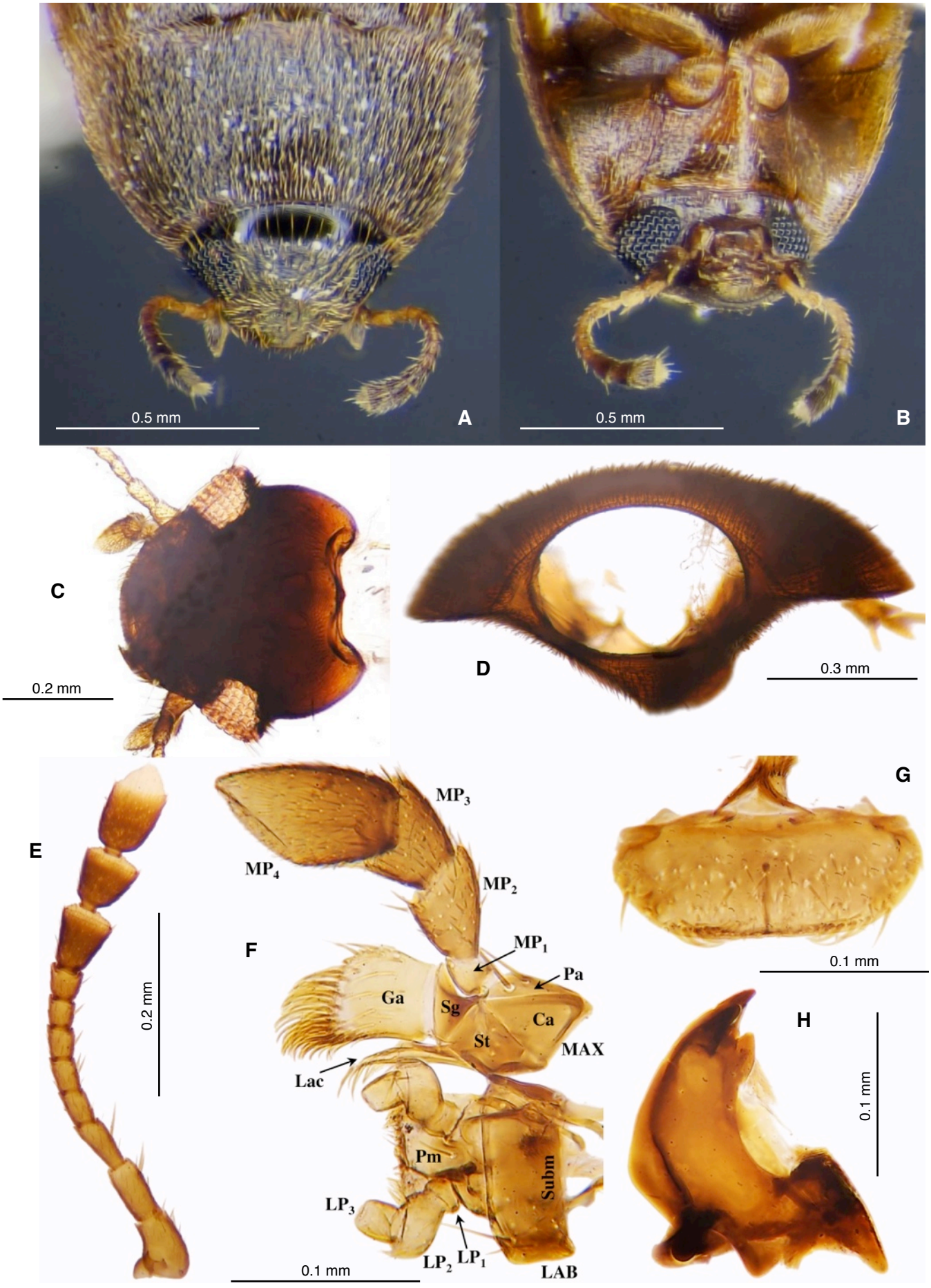

Fig. **3**. ***Litargus*** (***Litargosomus***) ***arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**., holotype. **A**. Dorsal aspect of head and pronotum. **B**. Ventral aspect of head and pronotum. **C**. Head in dorsal view (dissected). **D**. Pronotum in anterior view (dissected). **E**. Left antenna. **F**. Maxilla and labium along with maxillary and labial palps. **G**. Labrum. **H**. Left mandible in dorsal view. Abbreviations: **Ca**. Cardo. **Ga**. Galea. **LAB**. Labium. **Lac**. Lacinia. **LP**. Labial palpomere. **MAX**. Maxilla. **MP**. Maxillary palpomere. **Pa**. Palpifer. **Pm**. Prementum. **St**. Stipes. **Subm**. Submentum. **Sg**. Subgalea.

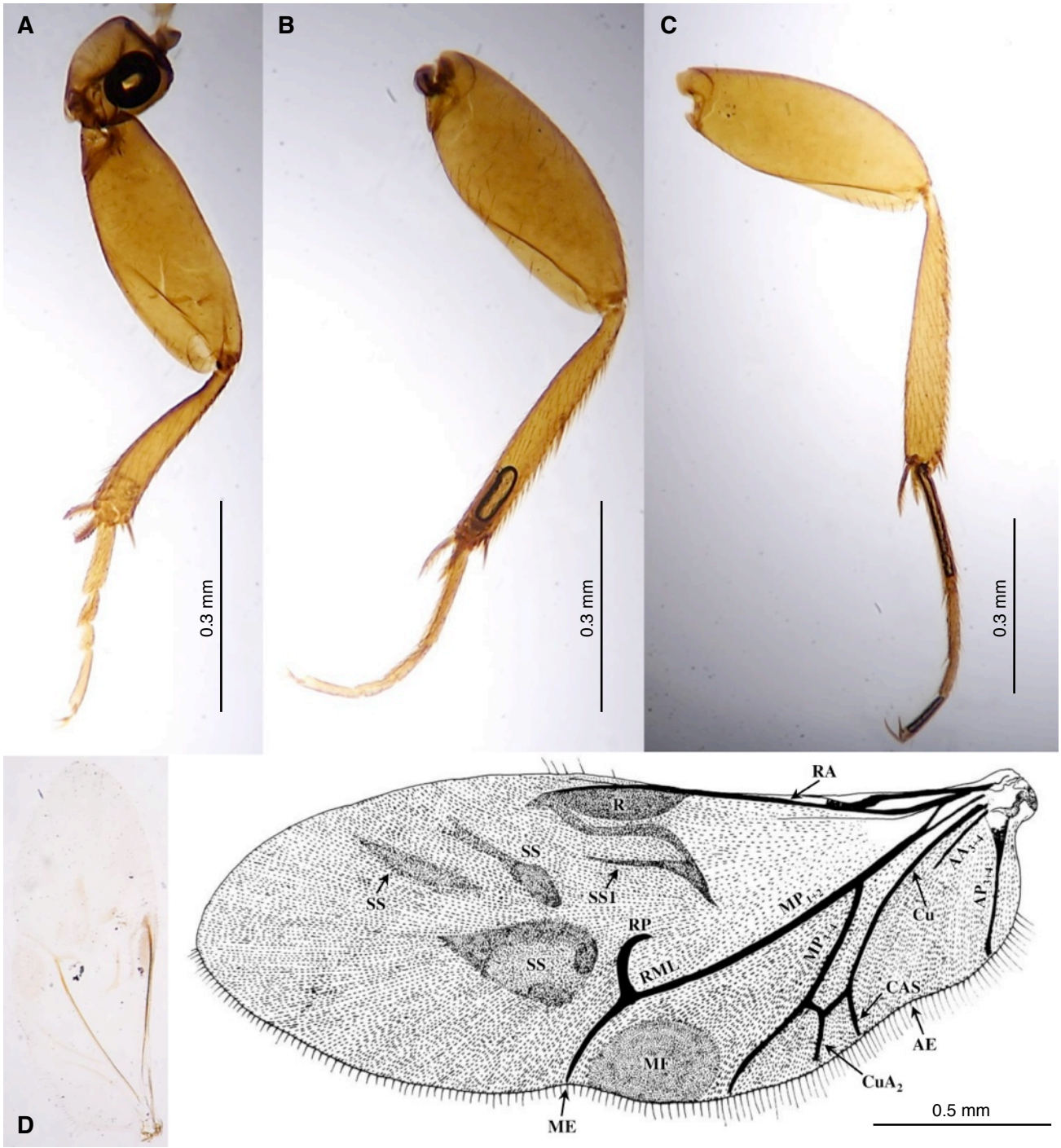

Fig. **4**. ***Litargus*** (***Litargosomus***) ***arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**., holotype. **A**. Foreleg. **B**. Midleg. **C**. Hindleg. **D**. Left wing along with its diagrammatic representations highlighting different parts.

apex (Fig. 2). Epipleural fold of elytra concave; epipleurae brown, covered with yellow recumbent setation. Scutellum brown, triangular, with short recumbent yellow setation.

Wings (Fig. 4D). – Hindwing length almost 2.5 times its width. Radius Anterior (RA) vein prominent, Radial cell (R) lacks base, Radius Posterior (RP) vein separates from RA and is not connected to it at the base. Media Posterior$_{1+2}$ (MP_{1+2}) vein almost straight and proximally joins to a curved cross-vein derivative called Radiomedial Loop (RML), RP attaches to MP_{1+2} forming a small strut-like vein, and from the point of conjuncture MP_{1+2} continues postero-apically forming a Medial Spur (MSP). Media Posterior$_{3+4}$ (MP_{3+4}) vein arises from the basal 1/3rd position of MP_{1+2} and continues postero-apically up to wing margin. Just below the RML there is a region comprising tiny bristle-like hairs that forms the Median Fleck (MF), also known as the binding patch that helps the wings to bind together during the folding process. Cubitus (Cu) vein is arched and bifurcates to form Cubitus Anterior (CuA_2) wing vein and Cubitoanal Strut (CAS) of wing that is formed by Cu, CuP and AA_3 wing veins. Anal Anterior$_{3+4}$ (AA_{3+4}) vein straight, short and incomplete and reaches 1/3rd of Cu vein from the base. Anal Posterior$_{3+4}$ (AP_{3+4}) vein almost straight and touches the wing margin. Several support sclerites are located throughout the discal region of the wing. SS1, a special slender support sclerite is located below the radial cell. Medial embayment (ME) shallow but prominent and the anal embayment (AE) present but not very prominent.

Abdomen. – Abdominal ventrites brown, 5 visible sternites, finely punctate, covered with short, intermixed yellow and brown recumbent setation. Metaventrite and mesoventrite brown, with yellow recumbent setation, finely punctate. Pygidium brown, covered with yellow recumbent setation. The tergite preceding the pygidium has two patches of specialized seta located symmetrically at both the sides (Fig. 5D) which might have a role in holding the wings in its folded position by interacting with the MF of the wing or might have some unknown sensory funtions.

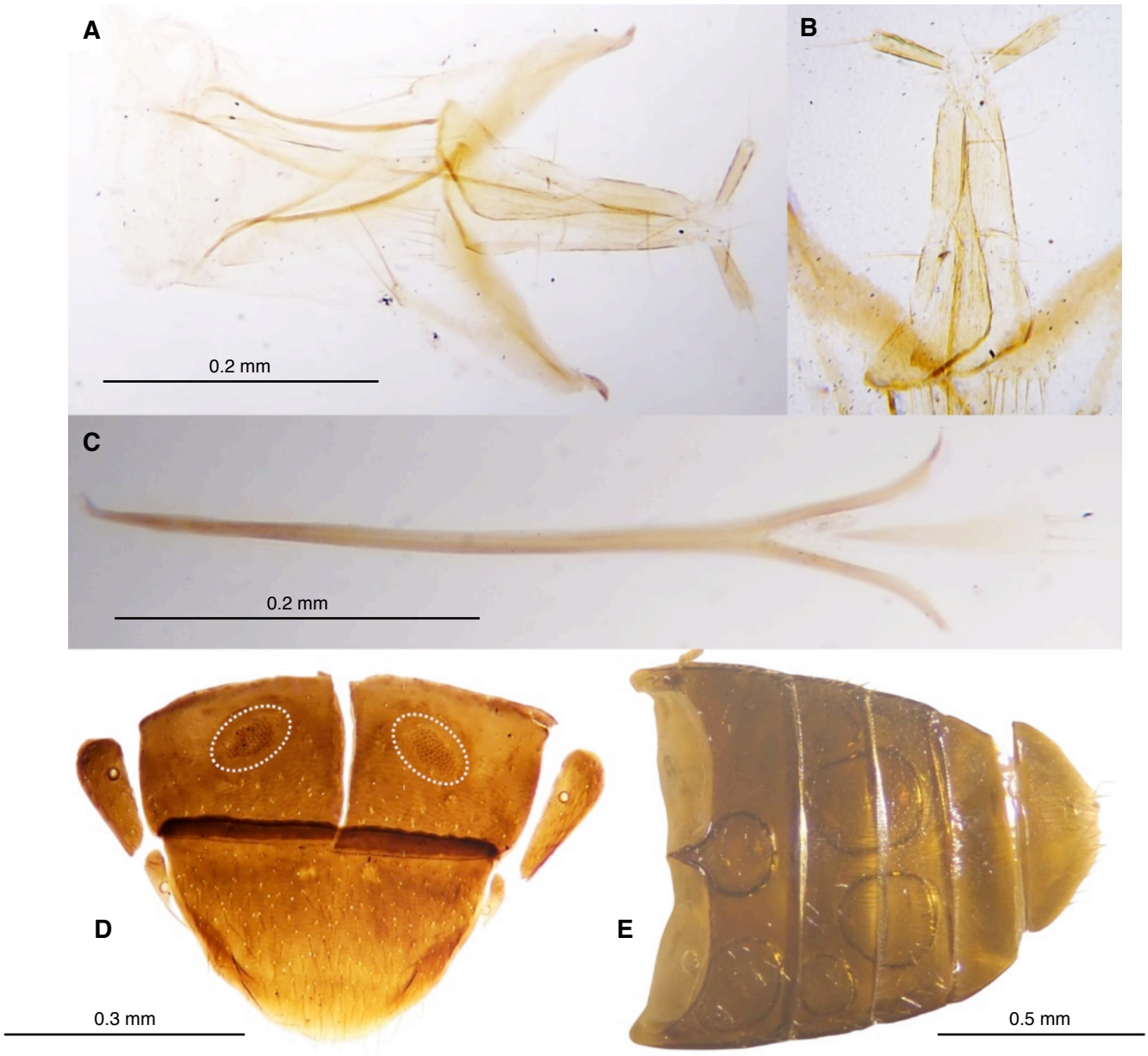

Fig. **5**. ***Litargus*** (***Litargosomus***) ***arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**., holotype. **A**. Ovipositor. **B**. Distal tip of ovipositor showing the gonocoxite. **C**. Ventral spicule (8th sternite). **D**. Terminal and penultimate dorsites, dotted circle indicates a patch with specialized stiff bristle-like hairs. **E**. Sternites (I-V).

Legs (Fig. 4A-4C). – Entirely light brown with light brown spines, covered with yellow recumbent setation. Femur spindle-shaped from lateral aspect. Tarsal segmentation formula 4-4-4. Tarsal claw simple. Tibiae with long, light brown spines apically, two of the tibial spurs located on the apico-ventral region are pectinate. Tarsomere I longer than II and III combined for all the legs. Foreleg: length of femur 1.4x the length of tibia, tibia distally broadens, tarsomere I subequal to IV. Midleg: length of femur 1.05x the length of tibia, lateral margins of tibia subparallel and constricts at the base. Hindleg: tibia slightly longer than the femur measuring 1.02x the length of femur, length of tarsus 1.05x the length of femur.

Genitalia. – 8th sternite forms Y-shaped ventral spicule, the distal part consists of a hyaline triangular plate bearing 4 to 5 very long seta positioned distally (Fig. 5C). Ovipositor comprising tergite 9 (paraproct) is membranous, tergite 10 (proctiger) is membranous containing a pair of subtriangular baculi. The posterior part of ovipositor contains a pair of cylindrical gonocoxite, rest as in Fig. 5A and Fig. 5B.

Male (Fig. 6-7)
Colouration pattern and description of the body is same as in females. Legs as in female, only the tibial spur on the dorsal surface of foreleg is very short (Fig. 6). Ventral surface of sternites 2-4 has patches of specialized seta in a bilaterally symmetrical fashion, 2 and 4 has smaller patches, the patches present on 3rd sternite are significantly larger (Fig. 7A). Genitalia long, tip of the median lobe of aedeagus is tapering and blunt, longer than the parameres; Parameres are slightly compressed sagito-laterally and curves towards the ventral side, tip of parameres are blunt but broader than the tip of the aedeagus (Fig. 7C, 7D).

Distribution. – India: West Bengal and Meghalaya.

Differential diagnosis. – The new species is similar to *L. taprobanae* Grouvelle, 1902 but differs from it by the arrangement of the yellowish elytral patterns and the structure of the antennae.
See the following key.

Etymology. – The species has been named in honour of nature conservationist Mr. Arjan Basu Roy, Secretary, Nature Mates Nature Club, West Bengal, India, for his contribution in the field of butterfly conservation and ecotourism.

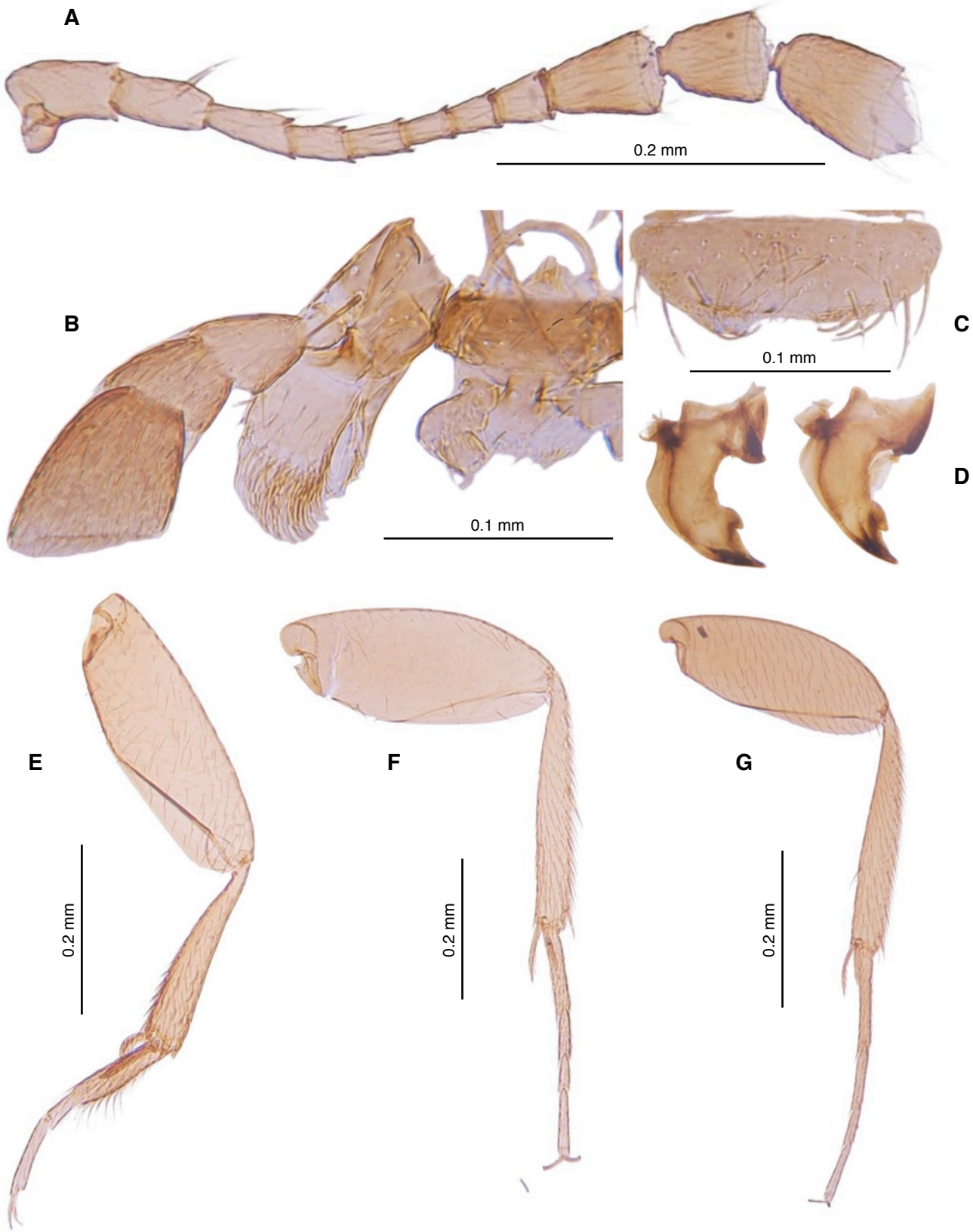

Fig. **6**. ***Litargus*** (***Litargosomus***) ***arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**., allotype (♂). **A**. Antenna. **B**. Maxilla and labium along with maxillary and labial palps. **C**. Labrum. **D**. Right mandible in ventral view (left image) and dorsal view (right image). **E**. Foreleg. **F**. Midleg. **G**. Hindleg.

List of Indian *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) species

***Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* sp. nov.**
Distribution: India: West Bengal, Meghalaya.

Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *jendeki Háva, 2023
Distribution: India: Meghalaya.

Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *majeri Háva, 2024
Distribution: India: Andaman Islands.

Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *orientalis Háva, 2024
Distribution: India: Andaman Islands; Australia: Christmas Island; Malaysia: Perak; Myanmar; Thailand; Vietnam.

Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *taprobanae Grouvelle, 1902
Distribution: India: Maharashtra (Bombay); Sri Lanka

Discussion

Mycetophagidae is an important beetle family since they are known to feed on fungi and rotting matter and play a vital role in energy conversion of the ecosystem. It becomes crucial to pay attention when performing taxonomy-based research and associated discoveries because no study can be carried out until the diversity of the group is fully understood. As per published data, the Oriental region represents only 8% of the world Mycetophagidae fauna, but taxonomic interest concerning this family has increased leading to several new discoveries and new distributional data from this region. The available data (unpublished data) suggests that the Oriental region represents 13% of species out of the total of 243 known species in the family. The genus *Litargus* comprises species which are morphologically close. Colouration and pattern of the pubescence is an important species discriminator. The species *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**. was identified based on the several morphological features like the colouration of the elytra, colouration and shape of the antennomeres, architecture of mouthparts, venation of the hindwings, morphometry of legs and structure of the female genitalia. The discovery of the new species of *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) takes the total Indian species count to 6 and it is the 3rd species described from the India mainland. The surge in research interest in *Litargus*, mainly from the tropical areas of the Oriental, Neotropical and Afrotropical regions shall lead to more new discoveries that would further demand robust taxonomic revisions in upcoming days.

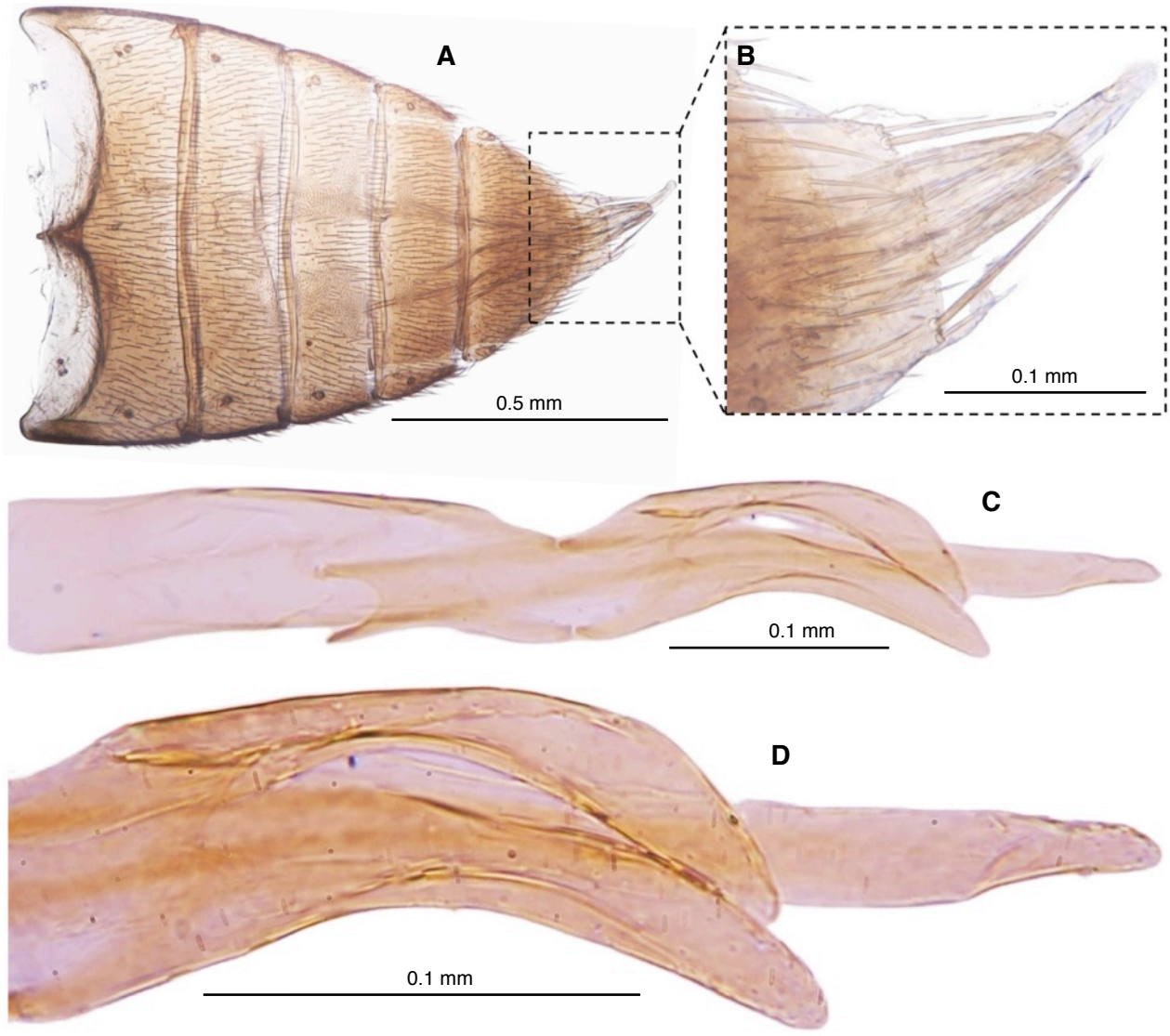

Fig. **7**. ***Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui*** Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**., allotype (♂). **A**. Abdomen in ventral view. **B**. Magnified image of the tip of the abdomen in ventral view showing the male genitalia protruding out along with the details of the seta present on the terminal abdominal segment. **C**. Male genitalia. **D**. Magnified image of the tip of male genitalia showing the details present on the median lobe of aedeagus and the parameres.

Key to Indian species of the genus *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*)

1. Elytral integument unicolorous **2**
– Elytral integument bicolorous **3**

2. Elytra and pronotum covered by yellow setation; antennae yellow . . . . . ***jendeki*** Háva, 2023
– Elytra and pronotum covered by light brown setation; antennae brown . . . . . ***majeri*** Háva, 2024

3. Elytra yellow with black small spots . . . . . ***orientalis*** Háva, 2024
– Elytra brown with yellow spots **4**

4. Elytra and pronotum dark brown; antennae dark brown; pronotum without yellow discal ornamentation . . . . . ***arjanbasui*** **sp. nov.**
– Elytra and pronotum light brown; antennae yellow; pronotum with yellow discal ornamentation . . . . . ***taprobanae*** Grouelle, 1902

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Résumé

Chakrovorty A., Háva J. & Bhattacharjee B., 2025. – *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* **sp**. **nov**. : une nouvelle espèce du Bengale-Occidental, Inde (Coleoptera : Tenebrionoidea : Mycetophagidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(46): 1 – 10.

La diversité des coléoptères du genre *Litargus* Erichson, 1846, sous-genre *Litargosomus* Motschulsky, 1858 (Coleoptera : Tenebrionoidea : Mycetophagidae) d'Inde a été étudiée et une nouvelle espèce *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) *arjanbasui* Háva & Chakrovorty **sp**. **nov**. est décrite, illustrée et comparée à des espèces proches. Une clé des espèces indiennes de *Litargus* (*Litargosomus*) est proposée.

Mots-clés. – Coleoptera, Tenebrionoidea, Mycetophagidae, *Litargus*, taxonomie, espèce nouvelle, description, Bengale, Inde.

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